

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 129426
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:NEA:PLANDE:SLB

APPROVED BY:NEA:PLANDE

S/S-O:LRMACFARLANE

NEA:HCOLLUMS

-----042038Z 072958 /65

R 041514Z JUN 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 129426

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT ISLAMABAD 5771 ACTION SECSTATE INFO TEHRAN
DATED JUN 04:

QTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5771

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PK, US

SUBJECT: A-7 SALES

REF: STATE 128399

1. SUMMARY: I CONVEYED ON JUNE 4 POINTS IN REFTEL TO
FOREIGN SECRETARY WHO HAD NOT RECEIVED AMBASSADOR YAQUB KHAN'S
REPORT. COINCIDENTALLY, SHAHI HAD BEEN ABOUT TO CALL ME IN TO
COMPLAIN ABOUT PRESS STORIES ON A-7 DECISION. SHAHI'S CON-
CERNS REFLECTED VIEWS OF BHUTTO WITH WHOM SHAHI HAD JUST MET.
IN VIEW OF INADVERTENTLY EMBARRASSING PRESS TREATMENT OF A-7
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 129426

DECISION, I BELIEVE IT WOULD HELP OUR POSITION HERE IF DEPT
WERE TO MAKE PUBLIC USG WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER OTHER AIR-
CRAFT SALES TO PAKISTAN, WITHIN THE PRESIDENT'S GUIDELINES.
END SUMMARY.

2. I CALLED ON AGHA SHAHI AT NOON, JUNE 4 TO INFORM HIM OF
OUR DECISION ON THE A-7 SALE DRAWING ON UNDER SECRETARY

BENSOMS'S CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR YAQUB CONTAINED IN REFTEL. AGHA SHAHI HAD JUST RETURNED FROM A MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS SIDE OF OUR TALK OBVIOUSLY REFLECTED THE TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH BHUTTO. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY SAID THAT HE HAD WANTED TO SEE ME AS WELL AND SUGGESTED THAT I LEAD OFF.

3. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, AGHA SHAHI SAID HE HAD NOT YET HEARD FROM AMBASSADOR YAQUB ABOUT HIS CONVERSATION WITH UNDER SECRETARY BENSON. I EMPHASIZED THAT OUR DECISION ON THE A-7 WAS MADE ON THE BASIS OF OUR NEW ARMS SALES POLICY ONLY. OUR POLICY GUIDELINES STRICTLY STATE THAT WE WOULD NOT BE THE FIRST TO INTRODUCE A MAJOR SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS SYSTEM INTO ANY REGION. THE A-7 SALE WAS THEREFORE PRECLUDED. I ADDED THAT WE ARE MINDFUL OF PAKISTAN'S DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS, PARTICULARLY FOR MODERN AIRCRAFT, AND WE ARE THEREFORE PREPARED TO CONSIDER GOP REQUESTS FOR COMBAT AIRCRAFT OTHER THAN THE A-7. I ALSO NOTED THAT THE MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR YAQUB HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE CONTEXT OF SEVERAL UNFORTUNATE NEWS ARTICLES ON THE A-7 SALE. I SPECIFICALLY STATED THAT THE INTERPRETATION IN THE NEW YORK TIMES OF THE DECISION WAS INACCURATE AND REITERATED IT WAS MADE ONLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR GLOBAL ARMS SALES POLICY.

4. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY REPLIED THAT HE HAS READ PRESIDENT CARTER'S ARMS SALES POLICY STATEMENT. HE REFERRED TO SPECIFIC PROVISIONS SUCH AS WE WOULD LOOK AT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 129426

WHAT ARMS NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WERE OBTAINING AND THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE REGION. SHAHI SAID THAT IT WOULD SEEM THAT ONLY ONE ASPECT OF OUR NEW POLICY, I.E. A NO FIRST INTRODUCTION OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS, WAS BEING CONSIDERED. HE ADDED THAT THIS WAS ONLY HIS VIEW IN PASSING AND ONCE HE RECEIVED A REPORT FROM AMBASSADOR YAQUB THE MFA WOULD GIVE US ITS CONSIDERED POSITION.

5. AGHA SHAHI WENT ON TO SAY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED OVER THE PUBLICITY GIVEN THE DECISION ON THE A-7. HE QUOTED BOTH AN AFP REPORT AND THE NEW YORK TIMES STORY CONTAINED IN STATE 128247. SHAHI SAID, REFLECTING, I BELIEVE, HIS TALK WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, THAT THE GOP WAS "VERY CONCERNED" THAT THESE ARTICLES HAVE APPEARED AT THIS DELICATE MOMENT WHEN THE GOVERNMENT IS NEGOTIATING WITH THE PNA. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY THEN REPEATED SECRETARY VANCE'S STATEMENT AFTER HIS TALK ON PARIS WITH AHMED AZIZ ON THE NEED FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND OUR DESIRE TO HEAL THE

WOUNDS OF THE PAST. SHAHI SAID THAT CONSEQUENTLY THE GOP WAS "VERY SURPRISED" TO SEE SUCH PUBLICITY. HE ALSO MENTIONED THE LOS ANGELES TIMES STORY ON THE O'KEEFE MEMORANDUM.

6. SHAHI ADDED THAT THIS KIND OF PUBLICITY DIRECTLY AFFECTS THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN. THE OPPOSITION MAY WELL THINK THAT THE UNITED STATES WANTS BHUTTO OUT AND DOES NOT WANT TO SEE A SETTLEMENT. HE THEN RAISED THE USUAL WHIPPING BOY OF THE BBC AND SAID THAT THE RECENT PRESS ARTICLES IN THE UNITED STATES COMBINED WITH BBC REPORTING "CREATES SUPPORT IN PEOPLE'S MINDS FOR THE SUPPOSITION THAT FOREIGN POWERS ARE SUPPORTING THE OPPOSITION."

7. THE NLREIGN SECRETARY WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE NEW YORK TIMES IS AN AUTHORITATIVE PAPER. IT SEEMS AS IF THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 129426

UNITED STATES IS NOW "LEANING" ON THE INDIAN SIDE AND THAT PAKISTAN'S AND INDIA'S POSITIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES HAVE BEEN REVERSED. HE ADDED THAT IT ALMOST SEEMS AS IF THERE IS AN ALIGNMENT NOW BETWEEN THE U.S. AND INDIA. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY ALSO NOTED THAT THESE EVENTS PUT IN DOUBT THE PROTESTATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP AFTER THE PARIS TALKS.

8. I RESPONDED THAT WE REGRET THE SPECULATIVE PRESS STORIES WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN THE U.S. HOWEVER, OUR OFFICIAL POSITION IS CLEAR AND WAS CONVEYED TO AMBASSADOR YAQUB BY UNDER SECRETARY BENSON. I ALSO NOTED THAT THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN IS ANNOUNCING THE A-7 DECISION HAD SOUGHT TO LAY TO REST THE SPECULATIONS ABOUT POLITICAL MOTIVATIONS. I REITERATED THAT A TRUE REFLECTION OF THE USG ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN WAS GIVEN BY SECRETARY VANCE IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENT AFTER HIS MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER IN PARIS. I THEN ADDED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD REPORTED HIS MEETING TO PRESIDENT CARTER, WHO HAS PERSONALLY RAFFIRMED HIS DESIRE TO GET U.S./ PAKISTAN RELATIONS BACK ON THE TRACK OF CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN FRIENDS AND ALLIES. (SINCE WE HAVE ALREADY TOLD THE IRANIANS THIS IS THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW, I THOUGHT IT WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL, IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR CONVERSATION, TO MENTION IT TO SHAHI.)

9. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY CLOSED BY SAYING THAT HE HOPED I WOULD REPORT OUR CONVERSATION TO THE SKOATE DEPARTMENT AND THAT THE USG WOULD DO SOMETHING TO COUNTERACT THE NEGATIVE IMPRESSION FOSTERED BY THE RECENT PRESS STORIES. I RESPONDED THAT I WOULD CERTAINLY REPORT THE GOP VIEWS

TO MY GOVERNMENT AND ADDED THAT WE HAVE MADE EFFORTS TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT.

10. COMMENT: THE FOREIGN SECRETARY WAS CALM AND SOFT-SPOKEN THROUGHOUT OUR MEETING. HE OBVIOUSLY INTENDED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 129426

TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE WAS SPEAKING MORE IN SORROW THAN IN ANGER, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME EMPHASIZING HIS GOVERNMENT'S DEEP CONCERN OVER THE ARTICLES IN THE AMERICAN PRESS. IT IS ALSO INTERESTING THAT WHEN SPEAKING OF THE DELETERIOUS EFFECT OF SUCH ARTICLES HE, MOST PROBABLY MIRRORING THE PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS, EMPHASIZED THAT THEY COULD ENDANGER THE BHUTTO/OPPOSITION TALKS AND WOULD STRENGTHEN THOSE IN OPPOSITION WHO THINK THE USG IS AGAINST THE PM. H F COMMENTS ON THE SPECULATION IN PAKISTAN THAT LP ARE "REALIGNING" IN FAVOR OF INDIA ALSO MOST PROBABLY REFLECTS A SUSPICION HELD BY BHUTTO.

11. SHAHI'S REACTION TO THE PRESS STORIES WAS EXPRESSED IN Milder TERMS THAN WE MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. IN THIS REGARD, IT HELPED THAT I WAS ABLE TO ANTICIPATE HIS ARGUMENT BY STATING OUR POSITION BEFORE THE GOP HAD RECEIVED IT FROM AMBASSADOR YAQUB KHAN. NEVERTHELESS, I BELIEVE THAT SALT HAS BEEN INADVERTENDLY AND UNNECESSARILY RUBBED IN BHUTTO'S WOUNDS BY THE PRE-MATURE AND SPECULATIVE REPORTING ON THE A-7 DECISION. I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HIGHLY USEFUL IN MITIGATING THE DAMAGE IF THE COMMENTS MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ON JUNE 3 COULD BE AMPLIFIED, EITHER BY AN ADDITIONAL STATEMENT OR BY APPROPRIATE BACKGROUNDING, TO REFLECT USG WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER SALES OF OTHER AIRCRAFT WITHIN THE PRESIDENT'S GUIDELINES.
CONSTABLE UNQTE
CHRISTOPHER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, AIRCRAFT SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE129426
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA:PLANDE:SLB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770200-0339
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770690/aaaadanz.tel
Line Count: 209
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 218e4685-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 STATE 128399
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2275812
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: A-7 SALES
TAGS: MASS, PK, US
To: NEW DELHI
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/218e4685-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009